

CITY ENGINEERING TIMES

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Columbus, Indiana

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SPECIAL EDITION: ANNUAL REPORT 1992 - THE YEAR IN REVIEW

CITY CONSTRUCTS PROJECTS WORTH OVER \$3 MILLION

PROJECT	COST
Central Avenue from 10th to 25th	\$1,761,592.46
River Road from south of 500N to 550N	\$301,490.20
Streetscape Phase III	\$126,240.00
Parking Lots (Lot Nos. 3 & 7)	\$58,270.33
People Trails (Clifty Park area)	\$112,823.17
Traffic Signal Project (Taylor & Waycross)	\$160,279.05
Hospital Area Improvements	\$310,000.00
Sidewalks, Brooks and Indiana	\$17,222.00
Central Avenue at Laurel Dr. (turn lane)	\$7,648.01
Haw Creek Ave. at 25th Street (turn lane)	\$10,939.78
16th & Franklin (flashing signal replacement)	\$12,700.00
Historic District Sidewalk Replacement Project	\$35,149.81
City Street Overlay Project	\$323,942.47
Drainage Quotes/Misc. Concrete Repairs	\$34,407.33
Alley Paving	\$6,097.08
Streetlight/Signal Pole Painting	\$3,972.00
Tree Planting (Central Avenue)	\$6,788.00
TOTAL	\$3,289,561.69

The City of Columbus has completed a record year of construction totalling over \$3 million, not including projects on state highways. The largest of the projects was the widening of Central Avenue from 10th Street to 25th Street, which was 80% federally funded. Other major projects included the reconstruction of a portion of River Road in cooperation with the county and the widening of Haw Creek Avenue and construction of a new 18th Street in cooperation with the Columbus Regional Hospital. For the first time in many years, the City has begun addressing the issue of repairing deteriorating sidewalks. The sidewalk project has been funded partly by contributions from property owners which covered the cost of the concrete.

More details on these projects in this issue.

US 31 AND SR 46 PROJECT COMPLETED

After more than two years of construction activities, Contractors United, Inc. completed the improvements to the intersections of SR 46 (25th Street) at US 31 (National Road) and SR 46 (25th Street) at Marr Rd. The SR 46 and US 31 intersection has traditionally been the most frequent site of traffic accidents in the city, averaging 45 per year over the last five years. Final accident statistics are not yet available for 1992, however, through November a total of 21 accidents had been reported.

The intersection of SR 46 and Marr Road has also been on the City's list of hazardous intersections, with a maximum of 28 in 1987. Through November, six accidents have been reported at this intersection.

FARM PROGRESS SHOW

September 28, 1992. After months of planning traffic routes and controls, the 1992 Farm Progress Show came to Columbus without a hitch. Traffic flowed very smoothly in and out of the site during the three day show. Show organizers would not provide crowd estimates, but most people involved agreed that well over 200,000 people attended, with Wednesday being the big day with over 100,000 in attendance. Vice President Dan Quayle also visited the city and the show site on Thursday. The cooperation of the city, county, and state police agencies, city and rural fire departments, and the city, county, and state highway departments provided "the best traffic flow in and out of any Farm Progress Show in the 40 year history of the show".

CENTRAL AVENUE

Bids for the reconstruction of Central Avenue from 10th Street to 25th Street were opened on February 11, 1992.. Low bidder was Contractors United, Inc. of Columbus. Their bid was \$1,761,592.46 of which 80% will be federally funded.

Construction began in early April with the installation of storm sewer pipe and the relocation of utilities. Shortly after construction began the City announced a tree planting program to replace street trees being removed for the widening. As a result, a total of 25 trees are scheduled to be planted in late December by Bruns Landscape Co. of Madison.

Late in September, all lanes were temporarily opened for Farm Progress Show traffic. In October, the final surface was placed, pavement markings installed, and sod was laid in all disturbed lawn areas. In November, PSI installed new streetlighting as the project was completed.

The project was completed on time, under budget due to the excellent cooperation from the area businesses and residents as well as the general public.

LOCAL NEWS

MISCELLANEOUS STREET IMPROVEMENTS

The intersection of Haw Creek Avenue and 25th Street was widened in anticipation of increased traffic from the new circulation patterns at the Columbus Regional Hospital.

A passing lane was constructed on Central Avenue at Laurel Drive to reduce congestion caused by vehicles turning left onto Laurel drive.

The Indiana Department of Transportation extended the right turn lane on 2nd Street approaching the State Street/Haw Creek Blvd. intersection.

CENTRAL AVENUE NORTH OF US 31

On August 4, 1992, a contract with SIBCO, Inc. was signed by the Board of Works for right-of-way engineering for this project. This contract covers the preparation of legal descriptions and abstracting. Right-of-way acquisition is anticipated in 1993 with construction in 1994.

RIVER ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

On June 22, 1992 a contract was awarded to Contractors United, Inc. for improvements to River Road at the northwest corner of the Columbus Municipal Airport. The \$292,053.75 contract was to be shared by the City and County, with the City share being 119,742.04. This joint project improves access from the northwest sections of Columbus to US 31 via River Road and County Road 550N, which has become more critical since the closing of Road 400N and its bridge over the Flatrock River.

Construction of the improvements was completed in September and the road reopened to traffic. The road was heavily used as preparations were made for the farm Progress Show and was used during the show by exhibitors.

SIDEWALKS

In July, the City announced an incentive program to encourage the replacement of sidewalks in the historic district. The historic district is generally bounded by 2nd Street, chestnut Street, 14th Street, and Washington Street. The owners were required to contribute \$4 per lineal foot of sidewalk. A total of 62 applications were received covering 118 lots, 9,000 linear feet. Approved were 7 applications covering 31 lots, 1950 linear feet. Work was completed in December.

HISTORIC DISTRICT PLAQUES

Historic District plaques which were donated by Preserve to Enjoy have been installed at the boundaries of the "Historic District" by the city traffic department.

NEW TRAFFIC SIGNALS / SIGNAL CHANGES

On February 12, 1992 a new traffic signal at Taylor Road and Waycross Drive began operation. This signal is fully actuated and includes pedestrian indications.

On May 18, 1992 a new traffic signal at 17th Street and Haw Creek Avenue was placed in operation as a part of the reconstruction of Haw Creek Avenue between 17th and 19th Streets in conjunction with the hospital renovation and expansion project.

On October 12, 1992 a new traffic signal at 22nd Street and Central Avenue was installed as a part of the Central Avenue project.

In August, 1992 the flashing signal at 16th Street and Franklin Street was replaced and modernized.

September, 1992. Work began on a state contract to modernize the traffic signals at 25th Street and Maple street; 10th/Taylor and National Road (including the addition of left turn signals); and State Street and Gladstone Avenue.

INTERSECTION CONTROL CHANGES

The following intersections change were made in 1992 in response to increasing traffic volumes and ongoing accident histories.

The intersection of Poshard Road and Middle Road was changed from a two way stop to a four way stop. This decision followed several severe accidents in 1992 after several years of decreasing accident frequency.

The intersection of Indiana Avenue and Mapleton Street was changed from a two way stop to a four way stop after it was discovered to be the only non-arterial intersection in the 1991 Intersection Accident Report of the most common accident locations in the city.

Other intersections which were converted to four way stops this year were Indiana Avenue at Hinman Avenue and Norcross Drive at Inwood Drive.

The intersection of 19th Street and Midway Street was converted from a two way stop on Midway to a two way stop on 19th to better accommodate the higher traffic volumes on Midway.

STREETLIGHTS

Several major streetlight system changes were accomplished in 1992 in cooperation with PSI Energy. The lights on the 10th Street corridor had been owned by the City and had been difficult to maintain. The old lights have now been removed and new lights, which are owned and maintained by PSI, have now been installed. The reconstructed Central Avenue corridor from 10th Street to 25th Street is also glowing now with new lighting, also installed by PSI. PSI also repaired and upgraded project the old downtown streetlighting system.

PARKING LOT EXPANSION / RENOVATION

On August 25, 1992, bids were opened for expansion of parking lot No. 7, located between 6th and 7th Streets on the east side of Franklin Street, and renovations to Lot No. 3, which is located at the southeast corner of 4th and Franklin Streets. Roberts Asphalt was the low bidder at \$58,270.33. Work began September 27, 1992. Renovations to Lot No. 3 were completed October 7. Work in Lot No. 7 was completed October 30. The work in these two lots created approximately 40 more parking spaces available for downtown employees and customers. Landscaping of these lots will follow.

DOWNTOWN PARKING STUDY COMMITTEE

On April 7, 1992, the Downtown Parking Committee, consisting of merchants, business owners, building owners, and office managers, began meeting to discuss the problems associated with parking in the downtown area. Topics discussed and studied by the committee include enforcement, parking rates for meters and leased areas, time limits, a parking garage, new surface lots, and parking needs of customers vs. employees. The committee is currently awaiting the results of a survey of businesses to determine if and where employee parking is available. The committee hopes to complete its work early in 1993.

STORM SEWER / DRAINAGE REPAIRS

Two major storm sewer trunk lines were installed in 1992, both in conjunction with other projects and leveraging other funds. In addition, numerous spot improvements and repairs were made throughout the City.

The Central Avenue improvement project included a major storm sewer system, which can be extended on either side of Central Avenue. This system, and the anticipated extensions, remove the storm runoff from the sanitary sewer system. This storm sewer system was constructed with 80% federal funding.

The Haw Creek Avenue / 18th Street reconstruction, which was constructed in cooperation with the new Columbus Regional Hospital project, also included the placement of major storm sewer trunk lines. The cost of this storm sewer installation was shared by the City and the hospital.

In addition to these major projects, the City also contracted, through a quotation process, repairs and minor construction amounting to approximately \$34,000. The contracted work included installation of new drywells, repairs of existing drywells, pipe and inlet repairs, cross gutter repairs, etc.

EDITORIALS

There is a fine line between extravagant and prudent. I have often wondered what the people of Columbus and Bartholomew County thought of the expenditure of \$250,000 for a new courthouse in 1874. Obviously, we have outgrown the building, but it is still a functional, useable part of our county government system.

As we go about the task of building (and rebuilding) our infrastructure, we must also walk that fine line. That has been a topic of great debate in recent years in the roadbuilding industry. Many European countries build roads which last much longer than those built in the United States. Of course, those roads are much more expensive to build, but they're cheaper to maintain. To finance their roadbuilding programs, many

European countries have gasoline taxes which are several times higher than ours.

I certainly don't advocate drastically increasing our gasoline tax. I do think that we must continually look for new ways to use our resources more efficiently and effectively. The first step in this process is to examine our construction standards, to be sure that the new infrastructure which the city and/or developers build are built to last and to be easily maintained.

Next, we must examine our maintenance practices. One of the most important aspects of our maintenance program has to be an improved system for controlling utility cuts. We must also look for alternative maintenance procedures which could defer the need to overlay a street. Part of the change is

an attitude adjustment. Crack sealing may not be pretty, but it certainly can extend the life of a pavement. Overlay is not always the best solution for a deteriorated street; in fact, it sometimes causes more problems (such as drainage problems and loss of curb reveal).

The bottom line is that we have millions of dollars invested in our street system. We must continue to maintain and improve that system with an ever-shrinking budget. The only way to accomplish that is to "work smarter" and to be innovative.

That is our goal for 1993, to find better ways to build, maintain, and rebuild our infrastructure. This is not a short term goal, it may take several years to find the solutions that work for Columbus.

CITY/REGION

HOSPITAL EXPANSION BRINGS STREET CHANGES

Expansion of the Columbus Regional Hospital, formerly Bartholomew County Hospital, has brought about several changes in streets surrounding the hospital. The entrance to the hospital and all of its parking is now on a new street, 18th Street. This new street includes a beautiful new bridge which is architecturally coordinated with the hospital. This revised entrance necessitated improvements to Haw Creek Avenue from 17th Street to 19th Street and the installation of a new traffic signal at the intersection of 17th Street and Haw Creek Avenue. The cost of all of these improvements was shared between the hospital and the city.

Along with the new and improved streets, the City, in cooperation with the hospital and INDOT, revised the blue hospital routing signs which visitors use to help them find the hospital.

STREET OVERLAY PROGRAM

The City's annual street overlay program covered 9.66 miles of streets this year, approximately 6% of the City's total street mileage. This year's project included the milling of excess pavement from four streets and the adjustment of manholes and water valves to the new pavement level..

PLANNING STUDIES

The City has been working on a storm sewer masterplan and an update of the city thoroughfare plan for over a year. It had been anticipated that these studies would be complete in 1992. Significant progress was made on these studies, which should be completed early in 1993.

HISTORIC DISTRICT PLAQUES

Historic District plaques which were donated by Preserve to Enjoy have been installed at the boundaries of the "Historic District" by the city traffic department.

NEW BRIDGE NEARS CONSTRUCTION

Plans to construct a new bridge on Second Street over the East Fork of the White River moved ahead during the past year. A public hearing for the project was held in February to receive input into the design process. Final plans for the earthwork portion of the project were then prepared and a contract for that work was awarded to Contractors United, Inc. of Columbus. That work could begin soon if the weather cooperates.

The start of construction of the project has been delayed due to difficulties in completing an agreement with the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) on a consent decree, which covers the continued monitoring and testing of the Old City Landfill site over which the new road and bridge must pass. An agreement has recently been reached which will provide monitoring and testing for the next five years. The City, Cummins Engine company, and Arvin Industries are to be commended for their willingness to initiate actions at a site such as this. Normally, IDEM and EPA would initiate action and would be forced to take legal actions to remediate a site. Such actions, if initiated by IDEM and EPA, are much more costly to the taxpayers and the respondents.

Final plans for the bridge are currently being prepared and the final right-of-way parcels are being acquired for the project. A bid opening is expected in March or April with construction to begin in May. Completion of the project is expected in the summer of 1994.

Following the opening of the new Second Street bridge, the existing Third Street bridge will be rehabilitated. Plans are currently being prepared for that rehabilitation which will include the completed replacement of the bridge deck. The project will be done half at a time, so that traffic can continue to use the bridge. The completed bridge will also include a "People Trail" lane.

HIGHWAYS TO GO METRIC

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) have announced that all construction contracts with federal funding which are let after 1996, must have metric plans. INDOT has taken the lead in the development of new metric design standards. This is a very ambitious undertaking and a very costly one.

"FRONT DOOR" PROJECT

The design team for this project, on SR 46 from SR 11 to 350W, spent the first half of the year exploring and refining ideas for the improvement of traffic flow and safety, lighting, landscaping, and the transformation of the highway into an urban parkway. One of the more visible activities was the installation of colored tubes to test the concept of colored light poles in May and again in July. The design team concluded its conceptual work in August.

In October, INDOT selected Woolpert Consultants to prepare construction plans for the project. The project includes the construction of a center median with strategically located left turn lanes, reconstruction of the interchange, construction of sidewalks and people trails including pedestrian crosswalks, lighting, and landscaping.

Funding for the project has been provided by federal demonstration funds which are being administered through INDOT.

CITY ENGINEER OFFICE STAFF

City Engineer:	David L. Hayward
Assistant Engineer:	Steve Rucker
Secretary:	Charlotte Welmer
Draftsman:	Ernie Wehner
Draftsman:	Randy Sims
Field Inspector:	John Butler

In January, Charlotte Welmer will retire after 30 years at city hall. Rebecca Douglas has been chosen to replace her. Also in January, Randy Sims will replace John Butler as field inspector.

LOOKING AHEAD WHAT TO EXPECT IN 1993

SERVICES TO ANNEXED AREAS

All of the areas which were annexed into the City in 1990, must receive city services by the end of 1993. Many of those services are already being provided. Some services, such as water and sewer, are currently under construction. Probably the last service to be provided will be streetlighting. That work must be coordinated with the water and sewer construction to avoid conflicts. Look for major streetlighting efforts in these recently annexed areas in the summer and fall of 1993.

CENTRAL AVENUE

The acquisition of right-of-way for the reconstruction of Central Avenue from US 31 to Bakalar Drive will take place in 1993. Construction of this section is expected in 1994. SIECO, Inc. has been retained to provide the right-of-way services for the project.

DEAVER ROAD

The staff of the City Engineer's office has been preparing plans for improvements to Deaver Road between Road 150W and I-65. This area has seen significant development in recent years with the completion of the Brookside subdivision and the construction of the Toyota plant. The improvements, to be constructed in 1993 will include widening and removal of sight distance obstructions.

CHESTNUT STREET

Construction of a new section of Chestnut Street from 2nd to 3rd Street is anticipated next year. Construction of this section is an important step in the implementation of the City's Thoroughfare Plan. Construction is expected to include a major storm sewer trunk line which, when extended, will enable the City to separate storm runoff from the sanitary sewer system.

ROAD 200S

The Bartholomew County Commissioners have developed plans for the reconstruction of this rural collector road from SR 11 toward Grandview Lake and the southwestern part of the county. Parts of this road are in the city and we are cooperating with the county to pursue the improvement of this road. We will begin acquiring right-of-way for this project in 1993 in anticipation of the first phase of construction in 1994.

SIDEWALKS

The City Council has appropriated funds to continue the sidewalk reconstruction project which began in 1992. The Historic District will again be targeted reconstruction in 1993. If funding is continued beyond 1993, the project could extend into other areas of the city.

MIDDLE ROAD

Through the platting process, much of the right-of-way needed for the extension of Middle Road from Rocky Ford Road to US 31 near the Target store has been dedicated. The design of this project is expected to be completed in 1993. Construction of this section could take place in 1993 subject to acquisition of the remaining right-of-way and funding.

ROCKY FORD ROAD

Through the years, the use of Rocky Ford Road has grown from a quiet country road to a busy, overcrowded urban thoroughfare. One section of this road, from Marr Road to Taylor Road, is currently part of a federally funded project which is being designed for construction in 1995. Design of the section between Central Avenue and Marr Road is expected in 1993 with construction of all or part of that section a possibility in 1993 also if right-of-way can be acquired and funding is available.

STREETLIGHTS

In addition to the recently annexed areas, the City Engineer's office is currently working with PSI Energy and REMC to provide and/or upgrade lighting at the following locations:

25th Street from Herman Darlage Drive to Jordan Drive.

US 31 from Brentwood Drive to Beam Road.

The area south and west of 3rd Street and Washington Street.

CHAUTAUQUA OF THE ARTS

After successfully accommodating traffic for the 1992 Farm Progress Show, City personnel have now shifted their attention to the 1993 Chautauqua, an art festival which is moving from Madison to Mill Race Park. Although the festival will present very different challenges, all personnel involved saw the benefits of thorough advance planning and have dedicated ourselves to giving this event the same effort.

MANY STATE / FEDERAL PROJECTS SLATED FOR 1993

NEW 2ND STREET BRIDGE

The final plans are nearly complete, agreement has been reached on the remediation at the Old City Landfill, and right-of-way acquisition is nearly complete, so we should expect to see construction to be in full swing in 1993. INDOT has already awarded a contract for placing fill on the west approach to the bridge, with work scheduled to take place during the winter, weather permitting. A spring letting is planned for the bridge and the remaining elements of the project. Construction is anticipated to take about 18 months.

SR 46 WEST OF I-65

The widening and improvement of this section should bring relief to residents of Tipton Lakes and southwestern Bartholomew County. Construction is scheduled to begin in the spring. Improvements are being coordinated with the Front Door Project.

FRONT DOOR PROJECT

The design of the Front Door Project, which includes SR 46 from 325W to SR 11 and the I-65 interchange, is expected to take shape in 1993. Plans should be completed and construction should begin early in 1994.

US 31 / CONRAIL OVERPASS

INDOT has scheduled the replacement of the overpass northwest of Columbus to begin in the spring following a February bid opening. The new structure will carry four lanes of traffic over Conrail and SR 11. Construction is expected to be completed late in 1993.

US 31 WIDENING

INDOT has begun planning for the widening of US 31 through the city. Design of the project should begin in 1993 with construction scheduled for 1996. The improvements along the route should be similar to those recently constructed at the SR 46 / US 31 intersection. The project includes the bridges over the Flatrock River and over Clifty Creek.